

Land Use Planning Checklist for Recreation and Visitor Services

Preparing for a Planning Effort (New Resource Management Plan (RMP), RMP Revision, or Planning Amendment)¹

Collect planning information/data; determine issues; and identify planning considerations, participants, and data needs.

- ✓ Issues and Concerns: Identify recreation planning issues and management concerns. These may be categorized as user demand, use/user conflict, visitor health, and safety and resource protection. Identify rationale to designate, drop, or change Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) and Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs).
- ✓ Preliminary Planning Criteria: Identify recreation-related planning criteria, plan parameters, or constraints (i.e. areas or issues that will not be addressed by the plan). For example, stating that the Prineville RMP revision will not revisit decisions made in the recently completed Deschutes River plan.
- ✓ Data Needs and Management: Identify existing recreation-related data sources, data gaps, or information to gather for plan development (i.e. community assessment reports, recreation setting characteristics or other inventories, visitor surveys, focus groups data, state-wide comprehensive outdoor recreation plans (SCORP), regional tourism plans and other relevant recreation, resource setting, community or economic data that can be captured and analyzed as data layers in GIS).² Data needs require information to determine recreation:
 - Demand – Identify and describe activities, settings, and outcomes visitors and residents prefer or demand by specific geographical areas.
 - Supply – Identify and describe existing or available physical, social and operational settings, (i.e. supply). Use recreation setting characteristics and map using GIS.
- ✓ Participants in the process: Identify likely recreation and tourism stakeholders, and other individuals or interest organizations that should be involved in the planning process and development. This fosters cooperation and coordination with other government agencies and potential recreation service providers.
 - Identify agencies, tribal or local governments with recreation interests that could participate as cooperating agencies or have interest as potential cooperating recreation service providers.
 - Identify interested and affected members of the public, including user or interest groups, outfitters and guides, and parks and recreation district staffs.
 - If requested, identify potential individuals or organizations for Resource Advisory Council (RAC) subgroup representatives.

¹ Refer to WO IM 2009-127 and Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1, Appendix F-1 for additional general Preparation Plan guidance.

² For specific format and additional information see Attachment 2 of WO IM 2009-127.

Planning Schedule: Identify any critical path time frames, such as timeframes for work with required time limits (e.g., Draft NEPA document comment period or Governor’s consistency review), or factors influencing the collecting or analyzing recreation related data and information, such as time for focus groups or workshops for travel management planning.

- ✓ Budget: Identify labor and operation support costs for filling recreation data gaps and obtaining critical inventory information. The budget information along with scheduling details will contribute to developing the statement of work if the project is to include third-party contractors.

Scoping³

Conduct public scoping and implement public involvement strategies.

- ✓ Public scoping: Work with planning staff to develop appropriate public involvement strategies to identify new or affirm preliminary recreation and visitor services related issues that should be addressed in the LUP and collect public input regarding the designation of SRMAs or ERMAs.
- ✓ Additional parameters: Identify any additional recreation related planning criteria. In consideration of public comments, make needed changes to the scope of the plan. For example: “due to public comments received, the Prineville Field Office will revisit the decisions made in the *Deschutes River Plan*.”
- ✓ Scoping report: Once the scoping period has closed, review the comments, then identify and revise the priority recreation issues and concerns that will be addressed by the planning effort.

Analysis of the Management Situation (AMS)⁴

Describe current management direction from a/l available decision documents.

- ✓ Existing plan direction: Identify recreation and visitor services management decisions from all applicable BLM plans (RMPs, Management Framework Plans, and plan amendments).

Prepare area profile that describes the current level and location of recreation use and categorize by management, administration, information and education and monitoring. Focus on

³ Public scoping and extensive public involvement is particularly important for recreation and other social, environmental and economic issues as it helps determine public expectations, benefits and potential cooperators for implementation of plan actions.

⁴ See the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1, Appendix F-3 for additional general AMS guidance. The intent of the AMS is to describe the current condition and trends of resources and resource uses within the planning area, and to describe and analyze the adequacy of the current management situation. To complete the AMS follow the guidance in the Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1, Appendix F, p. 12 for consistency and coordination with other plans and any specific mandates or authorities related to recreation and visitor services. Much of this information will have already been collected and analyzed as part of the earlier planning stages noted above.

information pertinent to LUP decisions that will be made.

- ✓ Special Recreation Management Areas
 - Identify all existing SRMAs.
- ✓ Extensive Recreation Management Areas
 - Identify all existing ERMAs.
- ✓ Public lands not designated as RMAs.
 - Identify lands with limited or minimal recreational values.
 - Identify lands reserved for other resource uses that preclude recreation use.
- ✓ Recreation Settings and Opportunities – Identify the current amount, type and condition of natural resource recreation settings (physical, social and operational), recreation opportunities available and recreation infrastructure/development (on-site and if necessary regional).
- ✓ Quantify the existing recreation use.
- ✓ Identify the type(s), activities and locations where special recreation permits are issued. Identify partnerships and agreements. Identify visitor health and safety issues. Identify use and user conflicts.

Forecast or describe anticipated demand for recreation use.

- ✓ Recreation Demand – Identify the public land visitors, including international, national and resident customers, as appropriate, and their preferences/demands for:
 - Physical, social & operational natural resource recreation settings,
 - Activity opportunities,
 - Experience opportunities, and
 - Personal, community, economic & environmental benefits.
- ✓ Indicators – Identify data and information sources:
 - Local/regional/national data,
 - Input from agencies, governments, and the public, and
 - Monitoring data (i.e. visitor use estimates and use patterns, information derived from visitor studies and focus group discussions).
- ✓ Analyze the above information to formulate statements related to trends and forecasts for recreation and visitor services. For example, “Analysis of the visitor records and monitoring data indicates that there has been a 5 percent increase annually of recreation use in the SRMA.”

Describe key features or areas of high potential for use.

- ✓ Identify unique landscapes and areas or types of resource features that should guide allowable uses and management action decisions.

Describe Potential Management Opportunities.⁵

- ✓ Management capability: Evaluate the ability of current management direction to achieve desired conditions and address resource demands. Consider:
 - The ability of current management and recreation supply to meet present and future demands based on resource and demand trends.
 - Opportunities to manage the land/people differently such as the designation or elimination of RMAs.
 - Field office capacity in terms of: staff, annual budget, partnerships and workload.
 - Applicable issues and concerns identified through scoping.
- ✓ Identify areas of relative social, economic or ecological importance to the recreation and visitor services program.

Describe consistency and coordination with other plans.

- ✓ Consistency with other entities: Discuss implications to and from other plans (county, city, state lands, tribal plans, federal agency plans).
- ✓ Opportunities for coordination: Identify opportunities for enhancing coordination or gaining expertise through cooperating agency relationships.

Specific Mandates and Authority - Laws, Regulations, Policy.

- ✓ Other requirements: Describe applicable state and federal laws, regulations and policy requirements that apply to recreation and visitor services. See Recreation Planning Manual 8320.

Land Use Plans or Land Use Plan Amendments and NEPA Documentation (EIS/EA) ⁶

Introduction. (Chapter 1)

- ✓ For the introduction briefly explain recreation and visitor services issues that were addressed and used to develop alternatives as well as alternatives considered but eliminated from further analysis.

⁵ Identifying management opportunities is a process of considering changes in management to respond to current condition and trend information and scoping issues. It serves as a starting point for alternative formulation (if applicable) by providing a list of possible management opportunities for later sorting and refining into a framework of compatible alternatives. Organize the information following the format in the Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1, Appendix F, p. 11.

⁶ General guidance for planning process and document development can be found in the Land Use Planning Handbook H-1610-1, Appendix F-4. Specific NEPA guidance related to alternative development, affected environment, and environmental impacts can be found in the NEPA Handbook, H-1701-1, Chapters 6 and 9. The following applies to planning efforts that will require the analysis of alternatives through preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Alternative Descriptions (see NEPA Handbook, Section 6.6). (Chapter 2)

- ✓ Within the general narrative description of each alternative, highlight the recreation and visitor services characteristics that distinguish each alternative.
- ✓ Within the management common to all alternatives narrative, describe the goals and management decisions for recreation and visitor services that are common to all alternatives.
For the No Action alternative narrative, describe the existing recreation and visitor services direction which can be taken from Current Management Direction tables developed as part of the AMS.
For narratives in the “action” alternatives, describe recreation and visitor services direction (theme) for each of the action alternatives.
- ✓ Identify alternative approaches for recreation and visitor services that were considered but eliminated from detailed analysis and briefly explain why they were eliminated. This is especially true for external recreation and visitor services proposals.

Develop Alternatives Comparison table⁷ in accordance with Land Use Planning guidance for Recreation and Visitor Services. (Chapter 2)

- ✓ Identify goals and objectives for recreation and visitor services.
- ✓ Identify areas to be designated as RMAs.
- ✓ Identify areas that will not be managed as RMAs.
- ✓ Identify recreation and visitor services management actions and allowable uses.
- ✓ Identify the interdisciplinary planning management actions and allowable uses for other resource programs necessary to achieve and complement the RMA objective.
- ✓ Identify all implementation-level decisions included in the LUP or amendment.

Impacts Comparison Table (Chapter 2)

- ✓ Provide a comparative summary of the social, economic and environmental impacts to recreation and visitor services associated with each alternative.

Affected Environment Description (see NEPA Handbook, Section 6.7)⁸ (Chapter 3)

- ✓ Describe applicable supply and demand information (e.g. user preferences; demand for particular recreation activities, recreation settings, experiences or benefits).
- ✓ Describe the physical, social and operational recreation setting character conditions.
- ✓ Explain pertinent recreation management, administration, information and monitoring direction (e.g. type, volume and location of recreation use; recreation management plans; existing closures and restrictions; existing infrastructure; types and volume of special recreation permits; fee program; tourism; and partnerships).

⁷ The Planning Handbook (H-1610-1) requires the inclusion of tables that compare alternatives and impacts (Appendix F, p. 16).

⁸ Discuss existing management, conditions, issues and trends but be concise and limit discussion to what is needed to understand issues and environmental consequences and to provide context for the goals and objectives. Most of this information will come from the AMS (such as the current condition and trend information), key environmental areas, and current management direction.

Environmental Consequences and Effects (see NEPA Handbook, Section 6.8).⁹ (Chapter 4)

- ✓ Describe the direct, indirect and cumulative effects and their significance.
- ✓ Describe and quantify the consequences of the no action alternative as if there were no change in the existing management.
- ✓ Describe the impacts of other resource decisions on Recreation and Visitor Services and provide a sufficient analysis to support all conclusions.
- ✓ For SRMAs analyze the:
 - Recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics by describing their unique value, importance or distinctiveness; especially compared to other areas used for recreation.
 - Ability to protect and enhance a targeted set of activities, experiences and benefits and desired recreation setting characteristics where specific recreation opportunities and recreation setting characteristics are managed and protected on a long-term basis.
 - Consequences of proposed management actions and allowable uses within the R&VS program to:
 - facilitate the targeted recreation opportunities;
 - maintain or enhance the desired physical, social and operational recreation setting characteristics;
 - address visitor health and safety, resource protection, and use and user conflicts (e.g. areas closed to target shooting, camping limits); and
 - address the type(s), activities and locations where special recreation permits would be issued or not issued.
 - Need for the proposed management actions and allowable uses (e.g. terms, conditions, or special considerations) for other resource programs necessary to achieve the SRMA/RMZ objective(s) (e.g. stipulations on mineral or other development, designations for all types and modes of travel, areas available for livestock grazing, or visual resource management classes).
 - Availability and ability of partners and other recreation program, facility or service providers to deliver services or complement management actions. Include entities that will be coordinated with in regard to joint management or assisting with implementation of plan actions or management alternatives.
- ✓ For ERMAs analyze the:
 - Recreation use, demand or R&VS program investments that require specific management consideration.
 - Ability to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and the associated qualities and conditions of the ERMA.
 - Ability to manage recreation commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses.
 - Consequences of proposed management actions and allowable uses within the R&VS program to:

⁹ The NEPA analysis must identify the known and predicted effects that are related to the issues. The effects analysis predicts the degree to which the resource would be affected upon implementation of the decisions/actions. Describe the methodology and analytical assumptions for analyzing impacts, and identify any incomplete or unavailable information that is critical to the analysis.

- facilitate visitor participation in the identified outdoor recreation activities;
 - maintain particular recreation setting characteristics;
 - address visitor health and safety, resource protection, and use and user conflicts (e.g. areas closed to target shooting, camping limits); and
 - address the type(s), activities and locations where Special Recreation Permits would be issued or not issued.
- Need for the terms, conditions, or special considerations for other resource programs necessary to achieve the ERMA objective (e.g. stipulations on mineral or other development, designations for all types and modes of travel, areas available for livestock grazing, or visual resource management classes).

Consultation and Coordination (Chapter 5)

- ✓ Describe any actions taken to consult and coordinate with recreation and visitor services interests.
- ✓ Identify the recreation and tourism stakeholders, individuals or interest organizations that participated in plan development or will be collaboratively engaged in plan implementation.

<h4>Preparing the Final NEPA Document (Proposed LUP/Final EIS)¹⁰</h4>
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- ✓ Evaluate public comments received on the draft LUP/EIS related to the recreation and visitor services program.
- ✓ Make changes to the draft LUP/EIS based upon public comment/staff comment for the proposed LUP/final EIS.
- ✓ Identify and note any changes made to the document.

¹⁰ The Proposed LUP/Final EIS builds on the Draft LUP/EIS to include appropriate responses to public comments received on the draft documents. The Proposed LUP/Final EIS may also contain modifications to the alternatives and the accompanying impact analysis contained in the Draft LUP/EIS.

The Record of Decision/Approved LUP¹¹

- ✓ Identify planning and implementation recreation and visitor service decisions in the approved LUP.
- ✓ If the LUP makes monitoring and evaluation decisions and/or adopts mitigation measures, make sure they are included in the ROD and approved LUP.

¹¹ The ROD/approved LUP is typically the Proposed LUP as modified in response to protests, the Governor's consistency review, or other considerations. It describes the goals, objectives, and management actions for fulfilling the management direction developed within the land use planning process.